

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1. (Currently amended): A lead holding structure of a mechanical pencil in which a lead is held through a fastener by forward and backward movements of a chuck disposed in front of a shaft cylinder, and the lead is pushed out, wherein

a portion of an outer periphery of the chuck corresponding to a lead holding structure from a substantially central point to a front end of the outer periphery is formed as a peripheral surface which extends substantially parallel to an axis or which inclines toward the axis of the mechanical pencil, and a portion of the outer periphery from the substantially central point to a rear end of the outer periphery is formed as a surface which is perpendicular to the axis or as a peripheral surface which is inclined toward the axis, an inner periphery of the fastener to which the outer periphery of the chuck is formed as an inclined surface which is inclined toward the axis rearward at a predetermined angle,

a radius of curvature of an inner periphery of the lead holding structure of the chuck is set in a range of 90% or more and 96% or less of a radius of the lead,

when the chuck holds the lead and is fastened by the fastener, a central point of the outer periphery of the chuck becomes a contact point with respect to the inclined surface of the fastener, and a point at which a line perpendicular to the inclined surface from the contact point and the inner periphery of the lead holding structure of the chuck intersect with each other is a load application point of holding the lead, the load application point is set substantially at a center of a lead holding length.

2. Canceled.

Application No.: 10/597,774  
Art Unit: 3751

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. §1.111  
Attorney Docket No.: 062659

3. (Original): The lead holding structure of the mechanical pencil according to claim 1, wherein an inner surface of the lead holding structure of the chuck is formed with projections and depressions of 10 $\mu$  or less.